

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 9-17, and 27-51 are pending.

Claims 1, 3-6, 10, 13, 14, and 27-33 stand rejected.

Claims 7, 8, and 24 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Claims 2, 9, 11, 12, 15-23, 24, 26, and 34-51 are withdrawn.

Claims 1, 6, 29, 30, and 31 have been amended for clarity.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1, 3-6, 10, 13, 14, and 27-33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite. More specifically, the Office Action on page 2 states that:

“each of the distributors” is not clear in juxtaposition with the “product distributors” from line 2. Is each entity the same or a different one? Further, it is not clear why/how Applicant may claim obtaining credential information for “each of the distributors” when only one product distributor need be present to fully meet the claim language.

Applicant has clarified that the “one or more product distributors” in the first element of claim 1 are the same as the “one or more product distributors” recited in the preamble. Thus, claim 1 is “a method for collectively performing validation of credential information of one or more product distributors associated with one or more product distribution transactions.” The first element of claim 1 clearly relates by reciting “obtaining a set of available credential information of each of the one or more product distributors associated with the one or more product distribution transactions.”

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3-6, 10, 13, 14, and 27-33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Publication No. 20010047299 to Brewer et al. (hereinafter “*Brewer*”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,847,935 to Solomon (hereinafter “*Solomon*”). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Applicant respectfully submits that *Brewer* in view of *Solomon* fails to teach or suggest, for example, “obtaining a set of available credential information of each of the one or more product distributors” as required by claim 1.

In contrast to the present invention of claim 1, *Brewer* and *Solomon* both relate to ‘rebates’ associated with product ‘purchasers’. *Brewer* teaches that “sales agreements [] may be negotiated to have a discount component called a rebate that is premised upon the performances of the contract holder (hereinafter “the participant,” even for hierarchical aggregates) in achieving the targeted goals of the contract agreement.” *Brewer*, para. 0032. Applicant respectfully submits that the “participant” relates to a ‘buyer’ not “one or more product distributors”. For example, *Brewer* teaches that the ““participant” is provided with sufficient current data to affect buying decisions that optimize [the participant’s] achievement of rebates.” *Id.* Again, *Brewer* states that, “Along with the projections for total contract volume and rebate opportunities, there is a “what-if” capability for the participant to project what [the participant] might earn based upon buying choices [the participant] may make in that rebate period.” *Id.*, para. 0033.

In para. 0036, *Brewer* teaches that “projected rebate amounts are calculated automatically based on the available contract performance information (derived from sales and market share data) once a predetermined period rebate period (e.g. 3 months) has elapsed”. Thus, the rebate amounts in *Brewer* have nothing to do with “credential information” of “one or more product distributors” as required by claim 1.

Thus, *Brewer* relates to ‘buyers’ and “rebates” for the ‘buyers’ in contrast to a completely different part of a sales channel and a completely different inquiry presented in claim 1. Namely, the present invention of claim 1 relates to “one or more product distributors”, “credential

information” of the “one or more product distributors”, and “eligibility requirements for compensation ... for the one or more product distributors”. Claim 1.

Applicant respectfully submits that *Solomon* fails to add the teachings and/or suggestions missing in *Brewer*. Like *Brewer*, *Solomon* More specifically, *Solomon* examines a number of circumstances for which a “consumer” will fail to receive a “rebate”. However, none of these circumstances relate to “credential information”, and none of these circumstances related to “one or more product distributors”.

Solomon teaches that, “Rebate processing center 12 contemplates any number of steps (e.g. steps 262, 268, 272, etc.) to halt rebate processing and await further actions by consumer 22.” *Solomon*, col. 14, lines 38-40. “These steps provide opportunities for breakage, since many consumers 22 will fail to undertake the appropriate actions.” *Id.*, lines 40-42. “For example, failed communications between consumer 22 and rebate processing center 12, failure to receive proper verifying materials such as receipts or UPC symbols, or failure to meet the promotion requirements” will halt rebate processing. *Id.*, lines 44-48. Accordingly, none of the circumstances related to processing the “rebate” as taught by *Solomon* relate to “validat[ing] the obtained credential information of each of the distributors associated with each of the product distribution transactions” as required by claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that *Brewer* in view of *Solomon* fails to teach or suggest:

- obtaining a set of available credential information of each of the one or more product distributors associated with the one or more product distribution transactions;

- storing the set of credential information in the computer system, wherein the credential information is stored in a form that can be processed by the computer system;

- loading from at least one data source a set of credential validation rule data;

- obtaining the one or more product distribution transactions associated with the one or more product distributors; and

- processing in the computer system the one or more product distribution transactions and the credential validation rule data to validate the obtained credential information of each of the one or more product distributors associated

with each of the product distribution transactions in accordance with predetermined validation criteria and to determine whether the validated credential information meets eligibility requirements for compensation associated with each of the obtained product distribution transactions for the one or more product distributors. Claim 1.

Furthermore, Applicant respectfully submits that *Brewer* in view of *Solomon* neither teaches nor suggests, for example:

Claim 5:

determining a set of rules associated with said collective group by using a set of preconditions to filter among a plurality of rules, said rule data comprising at least one test having an associated type;

partitioning said set of rules based on said type of said at least one test associated with said set of rules;

preparing said collective group wherein said collective group comprises tests associated with said test type; and

determining for said set of rule data whether said at least one test associated with said set of rules are valid.

Claim 6:

computing compensation for each of the one or more product distributors having validated credential information that meets the eligibility requirements for compensation associated with each of the sales transactions.

Claim 28:

wherein compensation comprises a commission.

Claim 29:

wherein the one or more product distributors comprise one or more members of the group consisting of sales agents, sales representatives, supervisors of the sales agents, and supervisors of the sales representatives.

Claim 30:

wherein

the rule data comprises credential information identifying regulatory constraints for each of the obtained sales transactions placed on at least one of the one or more distributors associated with said obtained sales transaction; and

processing in the computer system the rule data to validate the obtained credential information comprises determining if said credential information obtained sales transactions placed on at least one of the one or more distributors conforms to said regulatory constraints.

Claim 31:

wherein predetermined validation criteria comprises at least one member of the group consisting of:

required educational credits;
required licenses;
required level of liability coverage;
license renewal requirements;
background check; and
residency rules.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and all claims directly or indirectly dependent on claim 1.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

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Respectfully submitted,

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